

# DEAD HEAT FINISH.

Syonby and Race King Divide the Honors.

## BELDAME IN THE RUCK.

Glorious Struggle for the Rich Metropolitan Handicap.

Keene Colt, the Favorite, and a Despaired Selling Plaster at Long Odds Run Locked Down the Stretch at Belmont Park, With 40,000 Persons Cheering Them Wildly—First Water Takes the Juvenile—Heavy Betting With 370 Books in Line—Auspicious Opening of America's Finest Racecourse.

In a terrific driving finish, with 40,000 men and women cheering themselves hoarse, James R. Keene's three-year-old colt Syonby, by Melton—Optima, ran a dead heat in the rich Metropolitan Handicap, at a mile, over the Belmont Park course, with O. L. Richards' Race King, a four-year-old son of Tenny—Ordelite, who before the memorable struggle began was regarded as a selling plaster.

Few in the great throng disputed the official verdict, for the reason that while it was undoubtedly correct the horses finished at a point where it was impossible for more than a handful of spectators to see it.

Angels Deceive the Crowd. Judges Clarence McDowell and C. H. Pettigill, who stood in a direct line with the two horses as they rushed down toward them close to the rail, could not separate them. Over the heads of the judges one steward who stood to the left of the finishing rod said he thought that Race King had won, while another steward at a different angle was inclined to select Mr. Keene's colt as the winner. But others who were behind the judges were positive in their declaration that Syonby and Race King, rushing up stride for stride, were exactly on even terms as to their noses as they reached the wire.

Syonby a Hot Favorite. Syonby picked up 107 pounds, which was two pounds less than scale weight, and gave 29 pounds by the scale to Race King, who carried 97 pounds, including three pounds overweight. Syonby was a hot favorite at 2 to 1, backed down from three, while Race King was a 20 to 1 shot.

As there was no run off to decide the question of supremacy all bets on the pair were cut in two, the bettors receiving half the face value of the total bet. If for instance a man wagered \$10 on Syonby at 2 to 1 he would have received \$5, so that on this basis the crowd was about equally divided in point of satisfaction, for among the expert turfmen the opinion prevailed that if the dead heat had been run off of Race King because of his superior condition due to constant racing, would probably have carried the day.

Beldame Trails In. C. E. Rowe's Colonial Girl, a six-year-old mare by Meddler—Springdale, a 15 to 1 shot, was third, with the rest of the field strung out in a long dusty procession, near the end of which trailed August Belmont's famous mare Beldame, second choice in the betting, but evidently not ready for such a hard race.

Themis was in 1:41:5.5. As in the other races the condition of the track proved to be an important factor. Like all new racetracks it was decidedly soft and cuppy, with the exception of a beaten path, which was as hard as adamant along the outer rail of the homestretch leading close to the judges' stand.

Leaders Steer for the Path. It was for this path that Shaw made a beeline with Syonby as soon as he rounded the upper turn. A move that was quickly followed by Louis Smith, who had the leg up on Race King. That was why the two horses steered clear of the soft going in the middle of the track and rushed along so close to the thousands on the lawn that the exciting situation became intense.

The long duel with the whip between Shaw and Smith by the way recalled the strange fact that both of these jockeys, who were once affiliated with the late Pittsburgh Phil, had at different times lost their licenses for alleged quack riding. Shaw was reinstated a year ago this spring, while Smith received permission to ride again several weeks ago.

Delhi Withdrawn by Keene. It was the original intention of the Keene stable to start the great Delhi in the Metropolitan, reserving Syonby for the opening event of the card, but when the early scratches were announced the crowd was surprised to learn that Delhi had been withdrawn from the big race while Syonby had been selected to carry the famous colors "white, blue spots."

Syonby last year was considered by many to be the champion two-year-old colt. After his defeat by Artful and Trainer James Rowe decided to turn him out and reserve him for some of the big races this year.

Syonby's Great Trial. While Syonby did not make his bow until the middle of last season, his work this spring convinced Rowe that he was essentially an early horse, and when the magnificent Melton colt turned a mile at the Bay on Tuesday in 1:40 Rcw made up his mind to reserve Delhi for future events as Syonby was considered good enough to win yesterday's affair. So the public took the cue that if the Keene stable was contented to let Syonby represent it instead of Delhi the Melton colt was worthy of the most loyal support.

In point of comparison as they rushed down the stretch Syonby and Race King afforded a striking contrast.

Race King a Patched Up Cripple. The Keene colt, a superb racehorse of powerful proportions fairly towed over the little bulldog beside him, for Race King is one of the smallest horses in training, though game and speedy under the most trying circumstances. There was a time last year when Race King was looked upon as a hopeless cripple. But one day he came back to life up at Westchester and ran one of his best races.

Since then he has been constantly campaigning, and though he has not shown anything remarkable since the Aqueduct meeting he has been racing steadily with the idea of getting him absolutely fit.

beat him half a length in a five and a half mile race in 1901-2 which was a new track record for Jamaica. In that event Race King was so strong at the finish that he would have probably won in a longer race. But in the general calculation the little Tenny colt was entirely overlooked, inasmuch as he was meeting some high class horses instead of ordinary platers.

Beldame a Disappointment. Beldame's performance was a source of much disappointment to the public, although among the turfmen it was a generally accepted fact that she was not ready. She had worked a mile over the Bay track that had not been regarded as entirely satisfactory, and this fact was not concealed by the stable, yet the mare's remarkable races of a year ago had not been forgotten and many expected that she would come back to her old self.

For a time it looked as if Beldame might accomplish something, for she got away well and was a contender for nearly three quarters of a mile, only to drop back utterly routed.

A Two Horse Race from the Start. The race, it might be said, was between Syonby and Race King from the start, with Beldame close up to the end of the turn, followed by Wotan, First Mason, Oxford and Colonial Girl in the bunch, the rest trailing. When Beldame quit, First Mason dropped out of the race for a few moments, only to stop in his tracks, at the same time giving way to his stable companion, Colonial Girl. But the latter at the end was five lengths behind the leading pair.

Riders Bothered by Change in Track. The start was good, although there was something of a delay before Mrs. Cassidy started the race perfectly aligned. The race itself was for the most part truly run, although many turfmen would have preferred to have seen it decided over a hard track. The horses ran in the groove and were possibly bothered by the turn. The same may be said of the riders, for as soon as the big field swept into the stretch they seemed to lose their heads, a dozen horses swerving in different directions. But in time horses and riders will become familiar with the new method.

Winning Owners Divide the Purse. As the gross value of the race was divided, Messrs. Keene and Richards each received \$5,555, exclusive of their own fees. Mr. Richards did not care to run the dead heat off, and that matter it is probable that Trainer Rowe was just as well satisfied, as both horses were all out when they were unsaddled.

Syonby was clearly short of work was the reason ascribed for his failure to stand off Race King's rush at the end, and the latter's success bore out the prediction that he would win the race in a few days ago that seasoned horses would prove the factors over the track in its present condition.

Weather Conditions Unfavorable. While the weather in the morning indicated a perfect day the race was run under the most favorable conditions. The sky was overcast and a stiff chilling wind blew down the backstretch, directly in the faces of the horses as they stood at the post.

There was such a change in the temperature that thousands of men and women who came to the track dressed in summer costumes regretted that they had not brought their winter wraps along. Yet the enthusiasm of the crowd was always at the highest pitch, and with the partial success of the public favorite in the event of the day the crowd seemed to be well satisfied with the proceedings of the afternoon.

Crowd Interested in Big Race. While much interest was shown in the running of the first three races, it was evident that the thousands on hand cared for little else than to see the running of the Metropolitan and when the scratches and jockeys had been announced the paddock was soon overrun.

Under a low shed that nestled among lofty pines the horses after a few preliminary gallops were carefully rubbed down, after which the trainers started the crowd on with the utmost order.

Saddling the Crack Thoroughbreds. Many fair women were in the throng that surrounded the two magnets Syonby and Beldame. Mr. Keene's stable was a scene of activity, with a critical eye and seemed delighted with his appearance. As trainer Rowe tightened the saddle girths Jockey Shaw, who had a little "stuck" near at hand in the well known silks, stood near at hand in the well known silks.

"You must take him to the front," said the trainer to the jockey, "as soon as you get a break. Keep him in hand until you reach the stretch and then let him run the others into the ground." And Syonby, apparently cognizant of what was going on, stood near at hand in the well known silks.

Keene's Horse Heads the Parade. Outside of these two favorites, the other horses were comparatively neglected, the point of public attention, but when the bugle sounded and the cavernous grand stand had been filled to overflowing by the waiting throngs it did not take long for Syonby to walk out of the paddock gate at the head of the parade.

He looked a king of thoroughbreds, with arched neck and flashing eyes, as he trotted about for a moment, but as Shaw yanked at the bridle this splendid racehorse became out-dressed and walked out into the middle of the track to receive an accolade.

Westerners Prominent in the Line. Close behind him came C. E. Rowe's pair, First Mason, a half brother to the famous McChesney, with Lynne up and Colonial Girl, the winner of the "Big World" Handicap from Hermie last year. A. W. Booker rode the Meddler mare, while Arthur Redfern followed her with R. T. Wilson, Jr.'s Dolly Sparker.

Then David Johnson's Jacquin, a Knight of the Thistle, followed by Michael O'Brien, who had been a runner in the Central States and in the Middle Atlantic States in the afternoon.

In this city the day opened fair and warmer, but in the afternoon it became a steady rain, with the wind shifting from south to east; average humidity, 64 per cent; barometer, corrected to read to sea level, at 8 A. M., 29.95; at 3 P. M., 29.95.

The temperature is shown in the annexed table.

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